



Department of Justice

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ST. LOUIS AREA MAN SENTENCED TO PRISON
ON FEDERAL CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CHARGES

ST. LOUIS, Missouri - Ronald Baker was sentenced to 10 years in prison for possession of child pornography, U.S. Attorney Catherine L. Hanaway, of the Eastern District of Missouri announced today.

On November 10, 2005, officers of the St. Louis International Airport Police Department observed Baker sitting on the floor in the airport chapel using a laptop computer. They recognized Baker because he had previously been evicted from the airport for trespassing. Officers approached Baker and requested proof of ownership for the laptop computer he was using to determine if it was stolen. Baker was unable to produce any proof of ownership, and one of the officers observed what he believed to be an image of child pornography on the laptop computer screen. Baker was arrested at that time, and the laptop computer was seized, along with computer discs and paperwork containing handwritten notes of computer web sites for access to child pornography. He possessed more than 600 images, some of which depicted minors under the age of twelve engaged in sexually explicit conduct.

Baker, 44, St. Louis City area, pled guilty in February to one felony count of possession of child pornography. He appeared today for sentencing before United States District Judge Henry E. Autrey.

This case is being brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In February 2006, Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales created Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov/.

In addition to the St. Louis Airport Police Department, Hanaway commended the work on the case by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Missouri Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, the Regional Computer Crimes Education and Enforcement Group, and Assistant United States Attorney Hal Goldsmith, who handled the case for the U.S. Attorney's Office.

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